

Integrated Accessibility Standards Policy

Department: Administration
Policy #: I-01
Policy: Integrated Accessibility Standards Policy
Date: September 16, 2014 **Revised Date:**
Coverage: All Employees

1.0 Policy Statement

The Township of North Kawartha recognizes that persons with disabilities should be provided with an equal opportunity to access goods and services, employment, transportation and information in a manner consistent with the principles of independence, dignity, integration and equality as stated in the regulations of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA) and the Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001 (ODA).

2.0 Strategic Plan

The Township's Strategic Plan adopted by Council in 2014, states we will continue to align municipal department plans with the Township's Strategic Plan during the annual budget process.

3.0 Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to fulfil the requirements as set out in Ontario Regulation 191/11 made under the AODA and other relevant sections of that Act as well as the Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001 as it relates to the requirements for Accessibility Advisory Committees and their related functions.

The AODA provides for the establishment of accessibility standards. Accordingly, Ontario Regulation 191/11 (effective July 1, 2011), the Integrated Accessibility Standard (IASR), was enacted. Under this Regulation, municipalities must establish General policies, procedures and practices as well as policies for Specific Areas, those being Information and Communication, Employment and Transportation. Ontario Regulation 413/12, an amendment to O. Reg. 191/11, the Design of Public Spaces Standard was enacted. Under this Regulation, municipalities must have regard for the design of public spaces that are newly constructed or redeveloped that take into account persons with disabilities.

The ODA is intended to improve opportunities for people with disabilities and to provide for the identification, removal and prevention of barriers.

4.0 Administration

In support of this policy, procedures and practices may be established as necessary and appropriate in order to ensure that the policy is current and applicable. Such amendments or additions shall be approved by Resolution of Council and be coordinated with, and form part of this policy.

This policy becomes effective on September 16, 2014 .

5.0 Definitions

- 5.1 “Accessible Formats” may include, but are not limited to, large print, plain language, recorded audio, or electronic, such as Word, PDF, Rich Text, or HTML formats, Braille, and other formats usable by persons with disabilities.
- 5.2 “Accommodation” every person has the right to equal treatment with respect to the occupancy of accommodation, without discrimination because of race, ancestry, place, origin, colour, ethnic origin, citizenship, creed, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, age, marital status, family status, disability or the receipt of public assistance (Ontario Human Rights Code).
- “Accommodation” in this Policy also means providing for specific measures that take into account a person’s disability e.g. providing for an assistive device to access a Township service.
- 5.3 “Assistive Devices” means an auxiliary aid such as communication aids, cognition aids, personal mobility aids and medical aids (i.e. canes, crutches, wheelchairs or hearing aids etc.) to access and benefit from the goods and services of the Township of North Kawartha.
- 5.4 “Barrier” means anything that prevents a person with a disability from fully participating in all aspects of society because of the disability. Barriers may include a physical, architectural and attitudinal barrier as well as, an information or communication barrier, technological barriers, a policy, procedure or a practice.
- 5.5 “Disability” shall be defined as found in the Ontario Human Rights Code (Part II, Section 10.(1) of the OHRC):
- (a) any degree of physical disability, infirmity, malformation or disfigurement that is caused by bodily injury, birth defect or illness and, without limiting the generality of the foregoing, includes diabetes mellitus, epilepsy, a brain injury, any degree of paralysis, amputation, lack of physical co-ordination, blindness or visual impediment, deafness or hearing impediment, muteness or speech impediment, or physical reliance on a guide dog or other animal or on a wheelchair or other remedial appliance or device
 - (b) a condition of mental impairment or a developmental disability
 - (c) a learning disability, or a dysfunction in one or more of the processes involved in understanding or using symbols or spoken language

- (d) a mental disorder, or
- (e) an injury or disability for which benefits were claimed or received under the insurance plan established under the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997; (“handicap”)

- 5.6 “Policies” mean the policies the Township of North Kawartha intends to implement.
- 5.7 “Procedures” mean how the Township of North Kawartha will go about implementing their policy.
- 5.8 “Practices” mean what the Township of North Kawartha does on a day to day basis, including how to deliver the services.
- 5.9 “Principle of Dignity” means the policies, procedures and practices that respect the dignity of a person with a disability, that treat them as customers and clients who are as valued and as deserving of effective and full service as any other customer. People with disabilities will not be treated as an afterthought or be forced to accept lesser service, quality or convenience.
- 5.10 “Principle of Independence” in some instances, independence means freedom from control or influence of others - freedom to make your own choices. In other situations, it may mean the freedom to do things in your own way.
- 5.11 “Principle of Integration” means integrated services are those that allow people with disabilities to fully benefit from the same services, in the same place and in the same or similar way, as other customers.
- 5.12 “Principle of Equal Opportunity” equal opportunity means having the same chances, options, benefits and results as others. In the case of services, it means that people with disabilities have the same opportunity to benefit from the way you provide goods or services as others. They should not have to make significantly more effort to access or obtain service. They should also not have to accept lesser quality or more inconvenience.
- 5.13 “WCAG” means the World Wide Web Consortium’s Web Content Accessibility Guidelines.

Section 6 - General Provisions

6.1 Multi-Year Plan and Annual Work Plan

Multi- Year Plan – Schedule A (IASR)

The Township will establish, implement, maintain and document a multi-year accessibility plan, which outlines the organization’s strategy to prevent and remove barriers and meet its requirements under the Regulation.

Annual Work Plan – Schedule B (ODA)

Based on the multi-year plan, the Township will establish an annual work plan in and will report annually in accordance with the ODA. The annual work plan will be posted on the Township website and available in alternate formats upon request.

6.2 Procurement

The Township of North Kawartha will incorporate accessibility criteria when procuring or acquiring goods, services and facilities except where it is impractical to do so. When purchasing or acquiring self-serve kiosks the Township will consider people with disabilities and will incorporate accessibility features. Accessibility features may include, but are not limited to:

- Braille and/or tactile buttons and numbers
- An earphone plug-in for audio commands
- Audio commands
- Large screen displays
- Adequate clearance for a wheelchair or scooter under the kiosk

6.3 Training

The Township will train all employees and volunteers on this policy and on the Ontario Human Rights Code. Training will be provided by December 31, 2014 for existing employees. New employees will be trained as soon as practical following hiring or where there may be a change in duties that affects employment status. Records of the training shall be kept noting who was trained and when they were trained.

Section 7 - Specific Requirements

7.1 Accessible Information and Communication Standard

The Township will create, provide and receive information and communications in ways that are accessible to people with disabilities. If the Township determines that it is not technically feasible to convert the information or communications or the technology to convert the information or communication is not readily available, we will be obligated to provide the person that requires the information with an explanation of why the information is not convertible and include a summary of the inconvertible information.

7.1.1 - Emergency Information

The Township prepares emergency procedures, plans or public safety information and then makes the information available to the public. Refer to the Township Accessible Customer Service Policy related to the provision of emergency information.

7.1.2 - Accessible Formats and Communications Supports

The Township is obligated to create, provide and receive information and communications in ways that are accessible to people with disabilities:

- (a) Upon request in a timely manner, that takes into account the person's disability.
- (b) Does not cost more than the regular costs charged to others.
- (c) Consult with the person making the request and determine the suitability of an accessible format or communications supports.
- (d) Notify the public about the availability of accessibility formats and communication supports.

7.1.3 - Website Accessibility

By January 1, 2014 all website content documents and tools must comply with the OADA standard WCAG 2.0 Level A other than criteria 1.2.4 (captions) and 1.2.5 (pre-recorded audio description) - the Township of North Kawartha website is WCAG Level AA, which is the 2021 requirement

7.1.4 Education, Training and Materials - Public Libraries

Public Libraries shall provide access to or arrange for the provision of access to accessible materials where they exist.

Public Libraries shall make information about the availability of accessible materials publicly available and shall provide information in accessible format or with appropriate communication supports, upon request.

Public Libraries may provide accessible formats for archival materials, special collections and rare books.

7.1.5 Exceptions:

The IASR (Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation) does not apply to:

- product labels
- inconvertible information or communications
- information that the Township does not have direct control over or indirectly through a contract relationship

7.2 Accessible Employment Standard

The Employment Standard builds upon the existing requirements under the Ontario Human Rights Code in relation to how to accommodate individuals with disabilities throughout the job application process and the employment relationship. This Standard applies to paid employees, not volunteers. The compliance date is January 1, 2014.

7.2.1 Recruitment and Retention

The Township shall notify employees and the public about the availability of accommodations for applicants with disabilities:

- During the recruitment process when job applicants are individually selected to participate in an assessment or selection process
- If a selected applicant requests an accommodation, the Township will consult with the applicant and provide or arrange for suitable accommodation that takes into account a person's disability
- Notify successful applicants of the availability for accommodating employees with a disability

7.2.2 Employee Notification

The Township shall inform its employees of its policies used to support employees with disabilities including but not limited to, policies on the provisions of job accommodations that take into account an employee's accessibility needs due to a disability:

- As required to a new employee as soon as is practical after they begin their employment
- Whenever there is a request for the provision for job accommodation

7.2.3 Accessible Formats

Where an employee with a disability requests it, the Township will consult with the employee to provide or arrange for the provision of accessible formats and communication supports for:

- Information that is needed in order to perform an employee's job
- Information that is generally available to employees in the work place
- Consult with the employee making the request in determining the suitability of an accessible format or communication support

7.2.4 Individual Accommodation Plans (IAP)

The Township shall have a written process for developing a documented individual accommodation plan for employees with a disability. The process will include:

- The manner in which the employee participates in the development of the IAP
- Assessment on an individual basis
- Identification of accommodation to be provided
- Timelines for the provision of accommodation
- The Township may request an evaluation by a medical expert, or other relevant expert, at its expense, to assist with determining accommodation needs
- Employee may request the participation of a bargaining agent where represented, or a representative from the work place where the employee is not represented by a bargaining agent
- Steps to be taken to protect privacy of the employee's personal information
- Frequency with which the IAP will be reviewed and updated and the manner in which it will be done
- If denied, the reasons for denial are to be provided to the employee
- A format that takes into account the employee's disability
- If requested, any information regarding accessible formats and communication

- supports provided
- Identification of any other accommodations that may need to be provided.

7.2.5 Return to Work

The Township will have a return to work process in place for employees who have been absent from work due to a disability and require disability-related accommodation in order to return to work. Such processes will be documented and must outline the steps the Township will take to facilitate the return to work and include an IAP plan.

7.2.6 Performance Management, Career Development and Advancement and Redeployment

The Township shall consider any the accessibility needs of employees with disabilities and individual accommodation plans when:

- Using a performance management process
- Providing career development and advancement information
- Redeployment

7.2.7 Workplace Emergency Response Information

The Township will provide individualized workplace emergency response information to employees who have a disability:

- If the disability is such that the individualized information is necessary and the employee is aware of the need for accommodation
- If the employee requires assistance, and with their consent, the Township will provide the workplace emergency information to a person designated by the Township to provide assistance to the employee
- As soon as practical after becoming aware of the need for an accommodation due to an employee's disability
- Review the individualized workplace emergency response information when the employee moves to a different location, when the employee's overall accommodation needs or plans are reviewed and when the Township reviews its general emergency response policies.

7.3 Accessible Transportation Standard

The Transportation Standard is intended to make it easier for all people to travel in Ontario, including persons with disabilities. The Township does not have transit services nor does it license taxi operators. The Township will consult with persons with disabilities to make progress to meet the transportation needs of those in the community.

7.4 Design of Public Spaces

The Design of Public Spaces Standard is intended to apply to public spaces that are newly developed or redeveloped that are not covered by the Ontario Building Code/Built

Standard.

Public Spaces are defined as follows:

- Recreational Trails/Beach Access Routes
- Outdoor Public Use Eating Areas
- Outdoor Play Spaces
- Exterior Paths of Travel
- Accessible Parking
- Obtaining Services - counters, fixed queuing lines and waiting areas
- Maintenance

The requirements to meet this Standard become effective January 1, 2016.

7.4.1 Recreational Trails/Beach Access Routes

Recreational trails are public trails intended to allow pedestrians to participate in recreation and leisure activities, access playgrounds or get closer to nature. Beach access routes are intended to allow pedestrians to access a public beach area. They are often constructed pathways, allowing people to access a beach from a parking lot, trail or picnic area.

The Township will consult with the public and people with disabilities during the planning for new recreational trails. Organizations and municipalities do not need to consult about beach access routes.

The Township will consider:

- the trail's slope
- the need for and location of ramps on the trail, and
- the need for, location of and design of rest areas, passing areas, viewing areas, amenities and other features on the trail.

Exceptions may apply due to existing site constraints or when a requirement would likely have a negative effect on:

- properties protected by the Ontario Heritage Act, the Historic Sites and Monuments Act (Canada) or the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization's (UNESCO's) World Heritage List, or
- water, fish, wildlife, plants, invertebrates, species at risk, ecological integrity or natural heritage values
- wilderness trails, backcountry trails, portage routes, or trails only meant for cross-country skiing, mountain biking or driving motorized recreational vehicles, such as snowmobiles and all-terrain vehicles are not considered to be a recreational trail under this Standard

7.4.2 Outdoor Public Eating Areas

Outdoor public eating areas are places located outside where people can eat, such as outdoor food courts and picnic tables in parks.

When building new or making major changes to existing outdoor public eating areas, the following requirements must be met:

- at least 20 per cent, and no fewer than one, of the tables are accessible to people using mobility aids, such as wheelchairs
- the ground leading to and under the accessible tables is level, firm and stable, and
- enough space is clear around the accessible tables so people using a mobility aid can approach the tables.

7.4.3 Outdoor Play Spaces

Outdoor play spaces are areas with play equipment or features designed to give children and their caregivers' opportunities to play.

Consultation with the public and people with disabilities is required during the planning of a new build or during a major change to an existing outdoor play space. The following must be considered in the design:

- incorporate accessibility features into the design such as sensory and active play components
- ensure there is enough room for children and caregivers with various disabilities to move through, in and around the play spaces, and
- make sure the ground surface is firm, stable and designed to reduce impact to help prevent injuries.

7.4.4 Exterior paths of travel

Exterior paths of travel include outdoor sidewalks and walkways, ramps, stairs, and curb ramps.

Exceptions may apply if meeting a requirement is not practical due to existing site constraints. Exceptions also apply when a requirement would likely have a negative effect on:

- properties protected by the Ontario Heritage Act, the Historic Sites and Monuments Act (Canada) or the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization's (UNESCO's) World Heritage List, or
- water, fish, wildlife, plants, invertebrates, species at risk, ecological integrity or natural heritage values.
- this Standard does not apply to paths of travel that are designed to provide a recreational experience, or those regulated by Ontario's Building Code.

7.4.5 Accessible Parking

Accessible parking requirements apply to off-street and on-street parking spaces.

Off-Street Parking

Off-street parking is a space to park a vehicle temporarily that is not on a public road or street. Off-street parking includes open and covered parking lots and applies to public,

private and non-profit organizations. Off-street parking facilities must include two types of accessible parking spaces that are generally wider spaces for people who use mobility aids, such as wheelchairs. Off-street parking facilities must include a minimum number of each type and must have access aisles (a space between parking). Exceptions may apply when it is not practical for an organization to include the minimum number of accessible parking spaces due to an existing site constraint. Other off-street exceptions include parking used exclusively for:

- parking for buses
- delivery vehicles
- law enforcement vehicles
- medical transport vehicles, such as ambulances, and
- impounded vehicles.

On-Street Parking

On-street parking is a space where you can park your vehicle temporarily that is located on a common and public highway, street, avenue, parkway, bridge or similar type of road.

7.4.6 Obtaining Services - Counters, Fixed Queuing Lines and Waiting Areas

Accessible features must be considered in relation to obtaining services from a counter, fixed queuing guides and waiting areas.

Service Counters

Service counters must be low enough for someone to sit in a mobility aid, have clear space in front for a person in a mobility aid to approach the counter, including space for the person's knees and must have signage that clearly identifies accessible service counters.

Fixed Queuing Guides

A queuing area is a place where people line up for services and follow a set path. The queuing area must be wide enough and use tactile flooring for people using mobility aids and mobility assistive devices, such as canes, crutches and walkers, to move through the line, including when the line changes direction.

Waiting areas

Waiting areas that have seating fixed to the floor must ensure that at least three per cent of the new seating is accessible. Accessible seating means a space in the waiting area where someone using a mobility aid, such as a wheelchair, can wait to receive service.

7.4.7 Maintenance

Accessibility Plans must include:

- preventative and emergency maintenance procedures for the accessible aspects of the Township's public spaces, such as posting when regular maintenance occurs and letting people know about alternatives, and
- procedures for handling temporary disruptions in service when an accessible aspect of the public space is unavailable, such as posting a sign explaining the disruption and outlining an alternative.

Refer to the Township's Accessible Customer Service Policy for procedures.

8.0 - Documentation and Feedback

The Township of North Kawartha shall upon request give a copy of the policies, practices and procedures required under the Ontario Regulation 191/11 (as amended) – the Integrated Accessibility Standard (IASR), to any person. Any applicable photocopy charges will be applied.

The Township will use the Accessible Customer Service Request and Feedback procedure to allow the public to provide feedback on this policy.

9.0 - 2005 Accessibility Plan

The 2005 Accessibility Plan passed in accordance with the ODA, 2001 will be replaced with the Multi-Year Accessibility Plan and this Policy.

10.0 - Related Procedures/Resources

Accessible Customer Service Policy

- Customer Request and Feedback Procedure Policy contained in By-Law 110/09